The Time Dimension of Territorial Power Sharing

The Case of Northern Ireland

L.A.J. Strootman
S1383531

Universiteit Leiden

Photo Front Page: Strootman, L.A.J. (03/06/2018). *Spray-paint 'IRA Here to Stay', West Belfast, Northern Ireland.*

The Time Dimension of Territorial Power Sharing

The Case of Northern Ireland

L.A.J. Strootman

S1383531

l.a.j.strootman@umail.leidenuniv.nl

Abstract

Territorial power sharing is often used to diminish aspirations of independence among self-determination movements. The academic literature shows various perspectives on the effectiveness of territorial power sharing. It is often mentioned that territorial power sharing would have a short term stabilising effect, though aspirations of independence would revive on the long-term. This notion is examined through a discourse analysis combined with a content analysis in a case study of Northern Ireland and its self-determination movements. The research shows that the discourse on independence keeps decreasing over time. However, it seems like the struggle has been taken into the political arena, where a long-term plan for independence is evolving.

Index

Introduction

Ethnic conflicts on independence are an often returning concept in International Relations. Most of these are settled with a form of territorial power sharing (herein after TPS). One can think of cases in Indonesia (Trzciński, 2017), Ethiopia and Nepal (Butenshøn, Stiansen & Vollan, 2015). When a settlement like this is implemented so often, one would expect it to be successful. On first sight it seems to resolve a zero-sum game; the self-determination movement receives some power to rule itself, though still within the territory of the state. However, when both sides of the conflict have given their lives for independence or to prevent it, is TPS enough to settle these aims?

The case study in this thesis is used by some as the success story of TPS: the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland (Wolff, 2009, p.28). During the Troubles, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) fought a vicious war against the British government and the Unionists for independence and reunification with the Republic of Ireland. The use of bombing campaigns, assassinations and paramilitaries, led to the estimated number of "4000 deaths and over 40,000 injuries" during the Troubles (Fay, Morrissey & Smyth, 1999, p.121).

The conflict was settled through the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, which included power sharing between the Unionists and Nationalists in Northern Ireland and devolution under the British government. However, the success story shows some cracks. In some neighbourhoods splinter paramilitary organisations are still present (NOS, 22/05/2018), the Northern Ireland Assembly has not met for a year-and-a-half due to disagreement on e.g. the Irish Language Act (BBC, 05/02/2018) and the quote of the mural "prepared for peace, ready for war" (The Irish News, 15/10/2016) is often recalled.

Looking at the academic debate, it is often mentioned that TPS is a short term solution, resulting in the revival of the struggle for independence in the long term (Coronel Ferrer, 2012; Kymlicka, 1998; Bertrand, 2014). On the other hand, the main tendency in the Northern Irish society seems to be that it needs time to heal and generations to pass, before the legacies of the conflict have settled (Field Work[1], 31/05-03/06/2018).

---

[1] I visited Belfast in Northern Ireland for a better understanding of the conflict and the implementation of territorial power sharing. My observations in Northern Ireland used in this research are referred to as 'Field Work'.

This leads to the following research question:

Does territorial power sharing, as the outcome of an ethnic conflict, lead to decreasing aspirations of independence among self-determination movements over time?

This will be examined by an intertemporal co-variational analysis on TPS in Northern Ireland. By combining a discourse analysis and content analysis on the discourse of the PIRA and the Nationalist party Sinn Féin, it will be examined if TPS has decreased their aspirations of independence over time. By including a time dimension, this research will contribute to the empirical gap in the existing academic literature on the longevity of TPS.

Territorial power sharing (TPS)

TPS means distributing certain powers or an exclusive status from the national government to a specific region (Weller, 2008, p.14). After an ethnic conflict over secessionism, TPS seems like a solution to create a positive sum game for both parties. The state's sovereign territorial integrity is preserved, while the self-determination movement gains more power to govern itself. It could be an appropriate solution for a state clashing with ethnic minorities. Most states consist of a majority group co-existing with one or multiple ethnic minorities. This structure often leads to tensions between the groups and results in (non-)deliberate discrimination or disadvantaging of the ethnic minority, causing unrest within the state. A solution can be allocating power from the central government to the ethnic minority. This can be achieved by various forms of TPS (Benedikter, 2009, p.5-6).

The various forms of TPS can be categorised in "[federalism], autonomy, devolution and decentralisation" (Wolff, 2009, p.32). Though all forms involve some sort of power distribution, the relation towards the central government can differ. A federal entity is generally involved in central policy making, while an autonomic region receives its power through a local political institution. A variation within federalism (among others) can also be observed in symmetry and asymmetry. Symmetrical federalism means that all federal regions have received the same level of power on similar issues. In an asymmetrical federal system a discrepancy exists in the level and type of power between the various federal regions. Examples of the granting of federalism after ethnic tensions can be observed in Belgium, Malaysia and Nigeria.

As mentioned before, autonomous regions usually do not have any special powers within the central government, but receive power within their own region. Autonomous regions have legislative and executive powers and are special regions within the state with more and far-reaching powers than other regions. An example is the first autonomous region in Europe, Aland (Finland). An autonomous region is usually characterised by a democratic institution where authorized issues are governed. However, some issues remain under the mandate of the national government, like national security and international matters (Benedikter, 2009, p.5-12).

Decentralisation entails that the national government allocates some administrative powers to a region or multiple regions. However, legislative and executive powers are withheld and matters of decentralisation do not require constitutional change. Decentralisation is perceived as the minimum form of TPS (Benedikter, 2009, p.11).

An overall note for all forms of TPS, is that structures can be adjusted to a specific situation. This flexibility results in the fact that structures of TPS differ from case to case, also within the same category. An important example of this is devolution. Devolution is the British variation of autonomy, in which the British central government has allocated power and resources to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Because of the examination of the case of Northern Ireland in this research, further attention will be given to devolution.

All three regions have received devolved powers by the establishment of local executive and legislative institutions. The democratic bodies are elected through local elections, while the local electorate still votes for the national government. Governing issues are categorised in: excepted, reserved and transferred matters. Transferred matters are the issues devolved to the sub-government, this can be anything other than the reserved and excepted issues, for example education, the health system and agriculture. Excepted matters maintain under the rule of the central government and can differ depending on the extent of devolution, but mostly entail defence and international affairs. Reserved matters are in the power of the central government at the moment, but might be devolved in the future. In Northern Ireland these are sensitive cases like policing and the judicial system (McEvoy, 2008, p.158). Devolution is implemented to maintain the characteristics of the region and to bring politics closer to the British citizens. It is adjusted to the specific region, therefore, the particular structure and origins of devolution in Northern Ireland will be explained to further extent later.

Theories on territorial power sharing

Noticeable, is the divide in the literature on the effectiveness of TPS. This divide will be demonstrated below by analysing the existing literature.

Closer to secessionism

Many argue that TPS is a step closer to secessionism (Cornell, 2002; Kymlicka, 1998; Brancati, 2006). This argument is mainly divided into two positions: the strengthening of the local identity and granting the resources needed for secessionism

Strengthening identity

Some argue that by granting special powers to a certain region, the central government acknowledges the importance and the exclusivity of that region. This leads to the strengthening of the regional identity (Kymlicka, 1998). Brancati emphasises the role of regional parties in this identity building. The emergence of regional parties as a consequence of TPS is also a contributing factor to the increasingly strong regional identity. Depending on the political system, regional parties are likely to be elected when TPS is implemented, because of their closeness to the region and the regional ideas. However, these regional parties are more likely to introduce discriminatory policies and are able to mobilise the population towards independence. Additionally, TPS confirms and legitimises the exclusiveness of the group (Brancati, 2006, p.651-657). Depending on the TPS system, it can also institutionalise sectarianism, as might be the case in Northern Ireland. By incorporating the different groups in society at the governmental level, divides are institutionalised, maintained and will trickle down to the electorate. If self-determination movements are included in similar fashion, their ethnic divides are maintained, as are their aspirations (Deacon, 2012, p.171).

Resources and experience

By granting power and limited forms of self-determination through TPS, self-determination groups could obtain the recourses to achieve secessionism. By including the groups in governing or providing separate political institutions, political tools and experience are allocated to the groups and can be used to advance their goals. Self-determination groups receive the opportunity to mobilise their supporters towards their secessionist aspirations (Lustic, Miodownik & Eidelson, 2004, p.210). Kymlicka argues that by granting the tools and the experience of self-governance to the sub-government, the confidence in self-governing is built, making the step towards secessionism smaller. Often, sub-governments are able to create

their own revenue through taxes, have their own police forces and have legal institutions to reach the public. Additionally, Kymlicka claims that, even though the distribution of power is a top-down process, self-determination movements perceive TPS as granting power to the central government while maintaining a degree of self-determination. Often, the central government is perceived as illegitimate, therefore, demanding the power back would not be illegal. Thus, the more power distributed to the sub-government, the more this conviction is strengthened and the more the demands increase. Not having the right to self-determination seems like a limitation of their sovereignty (Kymlicka, 1998, p.138-141).

Therefore, it is argued that because of the strengthening of the regional identity and the availability of resources and governmental experience, TPS is a step closer to secessionism.

Closer to peace

Others argue that TPS, when implemented well, can be a step closer to stability and peace and is able to prevent secessionism.

Self-determination

TPS brings the government closer to the electorate by creating local governmental bodies, resulting in a more accurate representation of the region's aspirations and providing opportunities to participate in political affairs. The main argument is, that by granting central power to the region, the region will be able to decide on some of their own social, economic and political matters. This results in a greater feeling of self-determination and better fitting policies. Additionally, by bringing politics closer to the people, trust in the government is more likely to develop. All this should result in decreasing aspirations of secessionism (Brancati, 2006, p.655). Besides, TPS is a flexible solution to self-determination groups. Due to its flexibility, the agreement can adapt to the necessities in the region, providing a suitable solution for the specific situation and ethnic groups (Cornell, 2002, p.252).

Institutionalising opposition

Power sharing includes the minority in political decision making and therefore curbs ethnic conflict, according to Lijphart and Cohen (Cohen, 1997; Lijphart, 2008). A difference is made between majoritarian rule and non-majoritarian rule. Majoritarianism favours the majority in a democracy and excludes minorities. An example of this is the first-past-the-post system in the United Kingdom (UK). However, this can be problematic in the maintenance of minority rights, which can be subjected to the 'tyranny' of the majority (Lijphart, 2008, p.6-16). When (ethnic)

minorities are not able to secure their rights through political institutions, the result might be demonstrations, riots and conflict (Fuh-Sheng Hsieh, 2013, p.89), possibly leading to aspirations of secessionism. To prevent this, non-majoritarian rule (system of proportional representation) should be implemented according to Lijphart. This should preferably be a consociational democracy or a consensus democracy, which are forms of power sharing in which most minorities are included at the governmental level (Lijphart, 2008, p.6-16). This lowers the threshold to be represented in politics and increases the opportunities to participate in politics.

As mentioned earlier, some argue that TPS affirms the differences in society. However, Cohen argues that federalism and autonomy acknowledge the existence of divisions in society and make them visible and manageable. Instead of suppressing the claims by the ethnic groups, a moderate, institutionalised outlet for challenging the status quo is created. This leads to more moderate measures instead of extreme measures like secessionism. By not providing opportunities for ethnic groups to challenge the status quo, few methods are available to pressure the government in a peaceful and legal way (Cohen, 1997, p.609-614). Even though an increase of conflicts in politics would occur due to opposing ideologies when TPS is implemented, the conflicts are non-violent and institutionalised (Cohen, 1997, p. 624).

Thus, it is argued that by granting power to regional groups through democratic institutions, politics is more accessible to ethnic minorities and a legal outlet is created to express discontent and to challenge the status quo.

Time dimension

Scholars bring more nuance in the debate on the effectiveness of TPS by arguing that TPS has only a short term stabilising effect on an ethnic conflict (Coronel Ferrer, 2012; Kymlicka, 1998; Bertrand, 2014). However, again, a difference in perception is present.

Kymlicka for example clearly states that "*In general, it seems to me unlikely that federalism can provide an enduring solution to the challenges of ethnocultural pluralism. It may restrain these challenges for a period of time, but federal systems which are designed to accommodate self-governing ethnocultural groups are likely to be plagued by deadlock and instability*" (Kymlicka, 1998, p.112-113). TPS might not be enough to address the issues that lead to the aspirations of secessionism. The short term could provide a feeling of change, but time will show that core issues have not changed, heating up secessionist aspirations (Betrand, 2014, p.177).

It is also argued that because TPS is such a complex solution in which commitment and proper implementation is key, it is hard to actually operationalise functional TPS. During the negotiations and shortly after, TPS might seem a fitting solution, however, it could lead to disappointing results in the long-term (Ghai, 2000, p.10). Additionally, as has been argued above, the emerging regional parties as a result of TPS can play a role in mobilizing the population and intensifying the regional identity. However, this can be a graduate, long-term process. One should not only think about the resources granted for campaigning and media to raise the regional voice. Policies, like a specific educational system, can also play a role in this (Cornell, 2002, p.255). As these policy changes take time to implement, the effect will be gradual and on the long term. This confirms the idea that TPS is effective on the short term, but secessionist aspirations will rise on the long term.

Though, interesting to note, Barter mentions that there are very few cases in which meaningful autonomy has led to actual secessionism (Barter, 2018, p.300). The arguments made on bringing politics closer to the population and institutionalising minorities, have a positive stance on the long term effect of TPS. When following the argumentation of Cohen and Lijphart (Cohen, 1997; Lijphart 2008), the institutionalisation of opportunities to challenge the status quo results in the existence of a long-term outlet for discontent. Instead of having to reach for illegal and unconventional measures, TPS offers a long-term solution. Changing governmental policies does not require violence or secessionism anymore.

Rothchild and Hartzell have refined a timeframe of five years to measure the stability of a peace agreement that includes TPS, based on the idea that in these five years the first election after the conflict has taken place. If a country is still stable and peaceful afterwards, it has reached a milestone and stability is likely to endure (Rothchild & Hartzell, 1999, p.262). The conclusion of the research is that including territorial autonomy in the peace agreement contributes to a stable post-conflict situation in the five years after (Rothchild & Hartzell, 1999, p.268). Rothchild and Hartzell, therefore, assume that the stability of TPS moves in an upward linear line, which continues after the first 'successful' five years.

Again, various perspectives are notable in the existing literature. However, little empirical research has been done to confirm or contradict the statement of the longevity of TPS. Most researches mention the topic, mainly to underscore its short term effect, but do not examine the statement in further detail. This research will function as an addition to the academic debate, by researching one of the basic assumptions of TPS.

Background: The Troubles

Northern Ireland is chosen as a case study for this research, since the peace agreement (officially 'The Belfast Agreement', but mainly known as 'The Good Friday Agreement') implemented TPS as the result of an ethnic sectarian conflict over territory. It is a conflict of Nationalists against Unionists and the British government, in which the Nationalists have the goal to separate Northern Ireland from the UK and unite with the Republic of Ireland. Unionists on the other hand, strongly support the maintenance of the union of the UK and reject an unification with the Republic of Ireland. Various names and categorisations exist for both parties in the conflict, however, since most distinctions are not clear cut and are not the main focus of this research, the distinction is made on their aspirations regarding the Northern Irish territory: Unionists and Nationalists. Nationalists were mainly Catholic with republican aspirations and Unionists were mainly Protestants who were loyal to the British Crown (UCDP[1], n.d.).

To further develop this research, background information on the case of Northern Ireland is important to include.

Origins of the Troubles

The origins of the conflict go back to the 1600s, when the UK had imperialist aspirations towards Ireland. This materialised in the Act of the Union in 1800, in which Ireland became part of the UK (UCDP[1], n.d.). The Act of the Union united Ireland and the UK and created a common government in the British Westminster parliament (Dickinson, 2005, p.57-63). Resistance arose on the Irish side, with its peak in 1916 with the Easter Risings in which protestors took up arms to contest the British government. These protestors became the predecessors of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). This resistance resulted in the Anglo-Irish war from 1919-1921 between the British Army and the IRA. The IRA perceived the British rule as colonial and illegitimate. The use of violence was glorified and dying for Irish independence was associated with martyrdom (Maillot, 2005).

At this point in time, Sinn Féin became a popular party and was elected for parliament in 1918. It refused to enter Westminster and therefore to acknowledge the UK as a legitimate ruler. The Anglo-Irish war ended with the independence of Ireland and Home Rule was implemented in Northern-Ireland. Home Rule is a form of devolution, where a local parliament is established to govern some devolved matters. In this solution Northern Ireland was still part of the UK, but was able to rule itself to a certain extent through received devolved powers (Fay, Morrissey &

Smyth, 1999, p.51). Northern Ireland remained part of the UK, since four out of the six counties in Northern Ireland contained a Protestant or Unionist majority (Dixon, 2001, p.4). Though, some (mainly Nationalists) argue that this was manipulated by gerrymandering (An Phoblacht, 02/09/2012).

Many Nationalists still aspired to be part of Ireland and believed they were unjustly part of the UK, which caused a feeling of threat among the Unionists (Tonge, 2002, para. 2.1). Again, the majority of the Northern Irish population is Protestant or Unionist. Since the electoral system was based on the general British first-past-the-post system, the majority of the population was favoured. Together with the electoral borders of the counties, this resulted in Unionist dominated governments (Fay, et al., 1999, p.53).

The Catholics and Nationalists felt discriminated and supressed in Northern Ireland. One of the reasons was the Special Powers Act, implemented from 1922-1972 because of unrest and violence after the Anglo-Irish war and was endorsed by the British government. It was initially used to create order and peace in the province, but evolved in an instrument that enabled the Northern Irish government to supress the minority (Donohue, 1998, p.1090-1091). The mandate of the Special Powers Act kept growing, including censorship and the ban on Irish flags, while Nationalists felt restricted and threatened in their human rights. The Act was mainly carried out by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) (the Northern Irish police force), which consisted primarily of Unionist forces (Donohue, 1998, p.1102-1107).

Economically, Northern Ireland became weaker than the rest of the UK, hitting the Catholics and Nationalists the hardest. This had a direct effect on electoral discrimination. Voting qualifications were based on one's financial situation, in which only home owners could vote. Since housing was another discriminatory issue, Nationalists did not have a strong enough vote to bring about change in the Unionist government. Protestants were often favoured in housing, leaving the Catholics in poor living conditions. In addition to this, many Catholic Nationalists felt discriminated in employment and excluded from state services (Tonge, 2002, p.20-24). On top of perceived British imperialism came dissatisfaction and a feeling of being disadvantaged by the Northern Irish and British governments, leading to demonstrations for civil rights by Nationalists (Fay, et al., 1999, p.55-57).

During 1968 and 1969 the Nationalists used civil rights marches as a way to reach their Nationalist goals in a peaceful manner. However, this generated a violent reaction among Unionists who perceived the demonstrations as a threat. They attacked the protesters with no

restrictions by the RUC. This created a violent downwards spiral, which can be perceived as the 'official' start of the Troubles. The Nationalist paramilitary, the Provisional IRA (PIRA) had violent counter-reactions, (again) creating a threat for the Unionists (Smithey, 2011, p.55-61).

Though, the origins of the conflict are perceived differently from the Unionist perspective. Key in the existence of unionism is the fear of domination and oppression by the Catholics, after migrated Protestants from the UK were killed on a large scale in Ireland in 1641 and with Catholics as the majority on the Irish island (Smithey, 2011, p.54). The Orange Order (a Protestant order) was crucial in mobilizing Unionists in opposing Home Rule in 1921 and during the Troubles (McAuley & Tonge, 2007, p.35-36). Due to the violence previously used by the Nationalists and their aim to separate from the UK, Unionist paramilitaries were created (McEvoy, 2008, p.67).

The Troubles 1968 – 1998

The violence between the two groups heightened and the British Army was deployed in Northern-Ireland in 1969 to protect both communities. However, it did not take long for Nationalists to distrust the British Army, as the Army was perceived as an illegitimate army on Irish territory protecting the British Crown. The British government allowed the Northern Irish government to implement a quick internment policy without trial to curb the PIRA's actions (Fay, Morrissey & Smyth, 1999, p.58-59). As a reaction, the Nationalists protested on the streets of Derry for their civil rights. Here, the British Army oppressed the demonstrations violently by shooting and killing 13 unarmed protesters in 1972, on the day known as Bloody Sunday. The heavy retaliation by the British Army and the actions by the Unionist paramilitaries served as legitimisation of the PIRA's and Sinn Féin's struggle and their actions were intensified. Homes were burnt on both sides, both paramilitaries conducted assassinations, civilians were bombed and distrust and hatred escalated.

It was a conflict with retaliation tendencies. After Bloody Sunday came Bloody Friday, in which the PIRA exploded 21 bombs in the centre of Belfast. This retaliation continued throughout the conflict between the Nationalist paramilitaries, Unionist paramilitaries and the British Army (McEvoy, 2008, p.37-38). Mainly civilians became victim of the Troubles, leading to nearly 4000 people killed in 30 years and many more injured and mentally affected (Fay, et al., 1999, p.121).

The Peace Process

Political initiatives to solve the conflict were ongoing since the 1970s and onward, but had little impact on the situation. However, the 1990s show change in the willingness to negotiate a peace agreement, especially on the side of the Nationalists. This was mainly caused by Sinn Féin's change from military tactics to political tactics. A peace agreement was perceived as a helpful phase towards independence. These efforts were supported by the PIRA's ceasefire in 1994.

After this, Sinn Féin was able to join the peace negotiations, until 1996, when the PIRA broke the ceasefire by a bombing in Canary Wharf. According to the PIRA the British government was not negotiating with the right intentions and the process was too slow. The negotiations were in a rod, since the government wanted to include Sinn Féin in the negotiations, but refused this when the PIRA was using violence. A solution emerged when the national elections in 1997 resulted in a Labour government led by Tony Blair, functioning as a new start. It initiated new negotiations and urged the PIRA to abandon their violent tactics and Sinn Féin to confirm thei commitment to peaceful means. After the PIRA resumed its ceasefire in 1997, the peace negotiations were able to continue with Sein Féin (McEvoy, 2008, p.118). The eventual agreement was signed on 10 April 1998 and was called the Belfast Agreement or the Good Friday Agreement (BBC History, 2018).

Territorial power sharing in the Good Friday Agreement

Important to the Good Friday Agreement is that it includes a section declaring that it is legal to unite Northern Ireland with Ireland, if a majority votes in favour in a referendum. However, if there is no majority, Northern Ireland remains within the UK. This means that parties like Sinn Féin are free to pursue change in the territorial status of Northern Ireland, as long as peaceful tactics are used. Additionally, whatever the territorial status of Northern Ireland, all people will be free from discrimination and are allowed to identify themselves as British, Irish or both (The Belfast Agreement, 1998, Constitutional Issues).

Due to the nature of the Northern Irish conflict (a conflict between ethnic groups and between an ethnic group and the government) two kinds of TPS are included in the Agreement. This led to the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly with elected members through a proportional representation single transferable vote system (PRSTV), that has legislative and executive authority on devolved matters. PRSTV favours minorities in the democracy, because of the proportional representation. Votes will be directly reflected in the seats of the Assembly.

The Assembly and its devolved matters address the Northern Ireland – UK relationship (The Belfast Agreement, 1998, Strand One, para. 2).

The Assembly's decisions are based on a cross community system, which addresses the Unionist-Nationalist relationship within Northern Ireland. A cross community basis means that decisions in the Assembly are made with parallel consent. Thus, an issue has to be agreed upon by 50% of the Assembly, including 50% of both the Unionist and Nationalist Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). A cross community based decision can also be passed through a weighted majority (60%), with 40% of both groups in favour (Northern Ireland Assembly, 2017). The purpose of cross community based decision making is to assure that no sectarian majority will be able to rule alone. Critics argue that cross community based decision making actually imposes sectarianism, institutionalising the divide between the Nationalists and Unionists in society (McEvoy, 2008; Tonge, 2002).

The Good Friday Agreement also holds other arrangements, such as, the First and Deputy First Minister will represent the biggest and second biggest party and their nomination must be accepted based on a cross community vote. Additionally, the Secretary of State is responsible for the Northern Ireland Office in Westminster and functions as an intermediary between Northern Ireland and the central government. In the end, Westminster Parliament is still in control of the reserved and excepted matters concerning Northern Ireland. (The Belfast Agreement, 1998, Strand One, para.32-33).

To manage the relationship between Ireland and Northern Ireland the North/South Council is established, "to develop consultation, co-operation and action within the island of Ireland […] on matters of mutual interest" (The Belfast Agreement, 1998, Strand Two, para.1). The aim is to create closer ties between Ireland and Northern Ireland through a legitimate body. Additionally, the British-Irish Council is established to coordinate the developments of the islands, find agreement on issues of mutual interest and improve the bilateral relationship (The Belfast Agreement, 1998, Strand Three, para.1-12).

After the peace agreement

To accept the Good Friday Agreement, a referendum was held in May 1998 in both Northern Ireland and Ireland, which resulted in a 71,1% yes vote in Northern Ireland and a 94,4% yes vote in Ireland. With this high turnout, a strong mandate was confirmed. The referendum was followed by the first election of the Northern Ireland Assembly one month later. However, the formation of the Assembly experienced issues concerning the weapons of the PIRA, due to the

ambiguous description of decommissioning in the peace agreement. After strong negotiations, the PIRA agreed to inspections and the Assembly was formed in 2000, consisting of both Nationalist (including Sinn Féin) and Unionist parties. Yet, Sinn Féin entering the Northern Ireland Assembly led to unrest within the party. While some agreed with the new political tactic, others felt betrayed by Sinn Féin's recognition of the Good Friday Agreement. During the PIRA's ceasefire a split emerged leading to the Real IRA (RIRA), which remains an official terrorist organisation (Tonge, 2002, p.190-196).

The effect of the Agreement was explained by both Unionists and Nationalists, in similar but opposite ways. Nationalists in favour of the agreement argued that the Agreement led to an united Ireland. Unionists opposed to the agreement argued the same. On the other hand, Nationalists opposing the Agreement argued that the Agreement solidifies the union, while pro-Agreement Unionists argued the same. Sinn Féin viewed the Good Friday Agreement as a temporary solution and a transitional stage to independence (Tonge, 2002, p.195-196).

After the peace agreement violence has mostly been absent, which led to a situation of negative peace in Northern Ireland. Tensions between the two communities are still present, however, a resurrection seems unlikely, though not impossible. A famous mural "ready for peace, but prepared for war" seems fitting to the situation (The Irish News, 15/10/2016). Nonetheless, violence has vanished, paramilitaries are disarmed and the Northern Irish economy has improved (Mac Ginty, Muldoon & Ferguson, 2007, p.7). The PIRA was decommissioned in 2005, followed by the Unionist paramilitary UVF in 2009. The level of British militarisation was decreased to 5000 soldiers in 2007, a substantial decline from 30.000 soldiers during the conflict (Rolston, 2013, p.143). The Good Friday Agreement has institutionalised the divide in Northern Ireland, taking away the struggle in society and moving it to the political arena (Tonge, 2002, p.198).

At the moment, the Northern Ireland Assembly has not governed for almost a year-and-a-half. Many social issues are transformed into political, sectarian issues. Sinn Féin refuses to form a government with the biggest party DUP, if their demand for e.g. the Irish Language Act, which would make Irish an official langue in Northern Ireland, is not met. Over the years Sinn Féin has become the second biggest party in the Assembly, making their bargaining position stronger (BBC, 05/02/2018). When talking to inhabitants of Belfast and looking at legacies of the Troubles and the stability of the peace agreement, many are sceptical but see that in a far future when generations have passed, reconciliation might be possible. However, many are still scared and have the memories of the Troubles close to their hearts. Also the street art (that is regularly

renewed) in West Belfast shows lasting aspirations for a unification with Ireland (Field Work, 02/06/2018).

Extra attention will be given to the PIRA and Sinn Féin to create a better understanding of their existence and actions, since they are the main actors in this research.

The Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA)

The PIRA is one the biggest self-determination groups in the Northern Irish conflict. The origins of the PIRA go back to the Irish Republican Army (IRA) that fought for Irish independence in the 1920s. However, dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Independence caused the group to remain active. The IRA mobilised the civil rights demonstrations in Northern Ireland at the end of the 1960s, in response to the discriminatory policies and the bad living conditions of the Catholics. Due to the earlier described violent reactions to the demonstrations, a split took place within the group leading to the Official IRA (OIRA) and the Provisional IRA (PIRA). The goal of the PIRA was equal rights for Catholics and the unification with the Republic of Ireland (Punch, 2012, ix).

In 1969, besides functioning as a paramilitary protecting its community, the PIRA believed that the only way they would reach their goal was through violent actions (Shanahan, 2008, p.1). As a result of the power imbalance when fighting the British Army, the PIRA used forms of irregular warfare. Bombings and assassinations were the main forms of operation, resulting in approximately 700 civilians and a 1000 soldiers killed by the PIRA (Council of Foreign Relations, 2005). The PIRA was included on the list of official terrorist organisations until they decommissioned after the Good Friday Agreement in 2005. After decommissioning they stopped existing, though some underground splinter groups might still be present (Council of Foreign Relations, 2006). The PIRA has been strongly connected with the political party Sinn Féin throughout the conflict, until Sinn Féin turned to peaceful means (Shanahan, 2008, p.1).

Sinn Féin

Sinn Féin (meaning 'We Ourselves' or 'Ourselves Alone') is a political party active in both the UK and Ireland. It has Nationalist aims, but is politically located at left republican ideologies. The party was established in 1905 by Arthur Griffith to provide passive resistance to the rule of the British in Ireland. However, this passiveness changed drastically during the Easter Risings with Eamon de Valera as political leader. He strived for an independent Ireland, which got him elected with 73 Irish seats in Westminster. Sinn Féin refused to accept these seats,

which would acknowledge Westminster as a legitimate ruler. Instead, De Valera started Sinn Féin's lasting tradition of abstentionism and established the Irish parliament in Dublin, Dáil Éireann (Maillot, 2005).

Several splits have taken place within the party of which the split in 1969 is most remarkable. It is similar to the IRA's split, where Sinn Féin sides with the PIRA. A change occurred under the leadership of Gerry Adams when he adopted the 'armalite and ballot box' tactics in the 1980s, in which politics and military are combined. He followed the political success of Bobby Sands, who was elected in Westminster but died for the cause of a hunger strike. Adams, together with Martin McGuiness, led the party into the peace process, resulting in the Good Friday Agreement. In the first Assembly elections, Sinn Féin received 18% of the seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly and four seats in Westminster, the latter Sinn Féin keeps refusing up until today. A milestone was reached in 2007, when the DUP and Sinn Féin formed the Stormont government together for the first time. This brought Unionist paramilitary leader Ian Paisley and Nationalist paramilitary leader Martin McGuinness together as First Minister and Deputy First Minister (Britannica Online Academic Edition, 2018).

The principles of the party during the Troubles were mainly focussed on equal rights and an unification with Ireland. While these principles are still present, the party has developed more conventional policies as well, enabling them to govern Northern Ireland (Sinn Féin, 2018).

Research design

Though the literature on TPS varies between quantitative (Sambanis, Germann & Schädel, 2017; Saideman & Ayres, 2000) and qualitative research (Bertrand, 2014; Kelegama, 2015), little in-depth research has been done on the time dimension within this concept. Therefore, this research will use an intertemporal co-variational analysis of the effect of TPS on the aspirations of independence. The benefit of a qualitative research in this case is the intensive and detailed research, which enables one to observe graduate developments. It allows the researcher to take the context of the phenomenon into account. A co-variational analysis is focused on the independent variable and its effect on the dependent variable. Important is the counterfactual understanding in the co-variational analysis, where the outcome would be different had the independent variable not taken place. However, because most cases in International Relations cannot be rerun with the absence of the independent variable, it can never be truly known if the outcome would have been different. This is one of the limitations and can be resolved to a certain extent by making comparisons between carefully selected cases (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p.33-37).

Additionally, as the focus is centred on the effect of the independent variable, it is important to isolate this variable by using a most similar system design (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p.37-41). Instead of using a cross case comparison between similar cases, this research uses an intertemporal comparison within the case of Northern Ireland. A comparison will be made between the temporal cases of Northern Ireland before the implementation of TPS, Northern Ireland shortly after the agreement of TPS and Northern Ireland longer after the agreement of TPS. One of the benefits of using an intertemporal comparison of Northern Ireland, is that many variables are consistent and can be ruled out. This contributes to the isolation of the independent variable, though this can never be done to a full extent (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p.46-47).

Following the intertemporal co-variational analysis, the research question is:

Does territorial power sharing, as the outcome of an ethnic conflict, lead to decreasing aspirations of independence among self-determination movements over time?

Following the argumentation of Rothchild and Hartzell, TPS as having a continuing stabilising effect, the hypotheses are thought of in a similar but opposite fashion. Since it is argued that TPS only has a short-term stabilising effect (Coronel Ferrer, 2012; Kymlicka, 1998; Bertrand,

2014), it is expected that the aspirations of independence increase or at least do not decrease in the long term.

This leads to the following hypotheses:

> *Hypothesis 1*: Territorial power sharing leads to decreasing aspirations of independence in the short term.

> *Hypothesis 2:* Territorial power sharing does not lead to decreasing aspirations of independence in the long term.

Hypothesis 1 will be accepted when the research shows that the implementation of TPS has decreased the discourse on independence. One can think of a downward linear line. Hypothesis 2 will be accepted if the discourse on independence stops decreasing or increases in the long term. One can think of a flat line or even an U-curve.

Case selection

To be able to draw conclusions from the outcome of the research, the cases selected must be representative for the other existing cases and the academic literature. In the case of TPS it is often mentioned that, to be implemented well, the political system must be fully democratic. Only in these cases TPS can be meaningful, since the central government grants powers to a sub-national government through democratic institutions (Benedikter, 2009, p.9). This limits the case selection in a substantial way, when following the data on the level of freedom and democracy by the Freedom House (Freedom House[1], 2018). The second requirement is that TPS is agreed upon as a reaction to an ethnic conflict with secessionist aspirations. Again, this limits the case selection substantially as in most cases these violent ethnic conflicts do not take place in states with developed democracies.

This has led to the decision to focus the research on the case of the ethnic conflict in Northern Ireland, which meets both requirements. According to the Freedom House, the UK has the freedom status of 'free' and is perceived as a state with a developed democracy (Freedom House[2], 2018). Additionally, the conflict in Northern Ireland between Nationalists, Unionists and the British government of 1968-1998 is an ethnic conflict with secessionist aspirations (UCDP[1], n.d.). Though it might be an exceptional case empirically, it meets the requirements of the literature. Since this research aims to falsify a theoretical claim, the focus of this research is placed on the case fitting the literature.

Independent variable

In a co-variational analysis, the focus is on the independent variable. The main question is: 'does X have an effect on Y?' (Blatter & Haverland, 2012, p.33-35). Since this research tries to examine the effect of TPS on the aspirations of independence, the independent variable is 'territorial power sharing, as the outcome of an ethnic conflict'. Since TPS is such a flexible policy, it can be implemented in violent and non-violent situations. However, the effect of X might be different in these situations. To be able to generalise and to compare, the violent and non-violent cases have to be distinguished and kept as a constant. Because the consequences of the implementation of TPS after a violent conflict are extremer, research on these cases is required. Therefore, this research focusses on the violent cases. The definition of the independent variable 'TPS' is based on Deacon's very general definition of devolution. TPS is "the process of transferring power from the central government to a [territorial region through democratic institutions]" (Deacon, 2012, p.2).

Dependent variable

The dependent variable Y portrays the effect of X. The dependent variable applied in this research is the 'aspirations of independence among self-determination movements'. These aspirations can be expressed both verbally and physically. This means that the degree of desire for independence can be expressed in the discourse of the self-determination movement, but also in the physical actions of the self-determination movement.

Operationalization

Actors

The two actors researched here are the Northern Irish regional party Sinn Féin and the PIRA. During the ethnic conflict in Northern Ireland, the PIRA was the actor physically fighting for independence from the UK and for a unification with Ireland. After the Good Friday Agreement, Sinn Féin entered the Northern Ireland Assembly to carry on the struggle in politics. Though Sinn Féin distances itself from the violence by the PIRA now, Sinn Féin was strongly connected to the PIRA during the Troubles (The Irish Times, 17/02/1998). For this reason Sinn Féin and the PIRA will be analysed as the self-determination movements.

Timeframe

Since time dimension plays a big role in this research, the timeframe has to be chosen carefully. The Good Friday Agreement was signed in 1998 and marks a divide of the cases of Northern Ireland before TPS and Northern Ireland after TPS. Some argue that the height of the conflict is situated in the 1970s with the major event of Bloody Sunday in 1972, also the most lethal year of the Troubles (Fay, Morrissey, & Smyth, 1999, p.137). Therefore, the year 1972 will be taken as the first point of measurement.

Following the argument made by Rothchild and Hartzell (Rothchild & Hartzell, 1999, p.262), the second point of measurement will be within five years after the signing of the peace agreement and possibly before the first elections of the Northern Ireland Assembly, as it is assumed that this will be the moment all parties are pleased with the agreement. However, the first elections were held in 1998, the same year as the Good Friday Agreement, creating a time period too short to measure only before the elections. Thus the year 1998 is chosen for the second measurement.

The last point of measurement will measure the aspirations of independence in the long term. For this reason, the furthest point in time should be chosen. However, this is limited by Brexit. Brexit has substantial implications for the peace agreement and the aspirations of independence in Northern Ireland, as it contests the Northern Ireland-Ireland border. Currently citizens of the Irish island were able to move freely over the island as a member of the European Union. However, this could be complicated after Brexit. Since Brexit is such a unique feature of the UK and too recent to examine, it will be excluded from this research. The referendum was

announced on 20 February 2016 (BBC, n.d.), so to exclude this influence the third point of measurement will be 2015.

Methodology

The main method of analysis is the discourse analysis. The discourse analysis will be used to analyse the use of language and its meaning by self-determination movements concerning independence and in this case the unification with the Republic of Ireland. A discourse analysis is the study of language, but this definition is too basic in explaining its purpose in this research. Johnstone explains: "discourses' […] involve patterns of belief and habitual action as well as patterns of language. Discourses are ideas as well as ways of talking that influence and are influenced by the ideas" (Johnstone, 2002, p.3). The discourse analysis in this research will help to indicate to what extent independence and unification with Ireland are still an aspiration of the self-determination movements. It will show to what degree TPS has changed the self-determination movement's goals and the way they articulate this goal towards the public. A discourse analysis is helpful in the sense that it is not the objective study of language, but examines the meaning of the spoken, written or displayed language (Johnstone, 2002, p.3).

Because a discourse analysis is still subject to the researcher's interpretation, it will be supported by a content analysis. A content analysis is "an approach to the analysis of documents and texts, that seek to quantify content in terms of pre-determined categories" (Bryman, 2008, p.274). The content analysis will show the representativeness of the textual extracts and the author's understanding of the discourse analysis and will therefore make the conclusion of the research stronger (Prior, 2014, p.10-12).

Table 1 shows the sources used for the discourse analysis. The content analysis will also be carried out on the sources of the discourse analysis as a check-up, next to the separate content analysis of Sinn Féin's statements in the Irish Times. The latter displays the line of discourse in a graph, making the increase or decrease in aspirations more visible.

The sources for the discourse analysis are two sources by Sinn Féin and one source by the PIRA for every year, except for 1972 due to Sinn Féin's abstentionism. Two sources are chosen for Sinn Féin concerning a different context and communicating to a different public. According to Risse and Sikkink, it is important that the same discourse is communicated to different publics, with regards to norm internalisation. Norm internalisation is appropriate here since a change of the discourse on the norm 'independence' is researched here. "Argumentative consistency independent of the audience" is key here (Risse & Sikkink, 1999, p.29). This

however, was not possible for the PIRA, due to the inaccessibility of useful PIRA sources. This has been an obstacle in the research overall, combined with the scope of the research, since the PIRA was an illegal organisation and Sinn Féin was often linked to the PIRA. Therefore, the content analysis will only be done on the discourse of Sinn Féin in the Irish Times, a newspaper in which they often communicated their message.

1972: Sinn Féin addressing parliament	(Abstentionism)
1972: Sinn Féin addressing the party	The Ard Fheis 1972, presidential speech
1972: PIRA addressing the public	PIRA member Joe Cahill at Sinn Féin rally
1998: Sinn Féin addressing parliament	The Northern Ireland Assembly, first debate, 1 July 1998
1998: Sinn Féin addressing the party	The Ard Fheis 1998, presidential speech
1998: PIRA addressing the public	PIRA statement on decommissioning
2015: Sinn Féin addressing parliament	Northern Ireland Assembly debate, 07 September 2015
2015: Sinn Féin addressing the party	The Ard Fheis 2015, presidential speech
2015: PIRA addressing the public	Eamonn Mallie meets ... Martin McGuinness (interview)

Table 1: Sources discourse analysis

The categories created for the discourse analysis are based on existing literature regarding the ideology of the PIRA and Sinn Féin in the context of the Northern Irish separation of Britain.

The PIRA and Sinn Féin are strongly built upon a republican, anti-imperialist ideology. Irish distinctiveness is emphasised as is the Irish language. However, many joined the PIRA as a form of defence against the Unionist/Protestant paramilitaries and the British Army. The UK was perceived as an imperialist occupier which had illegitimate rule over Northern Ireland and ruled aggressively and oppressively (Malešević & Ó Dochartaigh, 2018, p.316-319). Even though the PIRA and Sinn Féin adopted different means (military and political), the objectives, especially in the twentieth century, were similar. (Whiting, 2016, p.541-542). Therefore, the following categories (Table 2) have been selected for the discourse and content analysis, based on the ideologies of the PIRA and Sinn Féin. Three categories of decreasing aspirations ('Moderation', 'Acceptance British rule' and 'Relating to British identity') have been added, enabling the discourse analysis to show a decrease in the strength of discourse on independence.

Categories	Independence & united Ireland
	Imperialism & repression (by the British government)
	Relating to other similar struggles
	Reference to historical Irish struggle against the British
	Promotion & use of the Irish language
	Moderation
	Acceptance British rule
	Relating to British identity

Table 2: categories discourse analysis

The categories used for the content analysis are similar to the categories used for the discourse analysis. However, since the discourse analysis has shown that the categories of moderation are not explicitly mentioned, these categories are removed. A decrease in the overall discourse on independence will show an increase of moderation.

Discourse analysis 1972

Some context of the year 1972 is needed to understand the analysed discourses. In 1972 the main Nationalist and Catholic struggle was focussed on civil rights and the improvement of living conditions. However, violence had already erupted and both the Nationalists and Unionists had established their (defence) paramilitaries, while the British Army had settled in Northern Ireland. Internment without trial had been implemented in 1971 by the Northern Irish government in cooperation with the British government and led to poor conditions in prisons and ill treatment of prisoners (allegedly torture) (Ruane & Todd, 1996, p.129-131). After the resignation of the Northern Ireland Prime Minister, the British implemented Direct Rule in Northern Ireland in 1972, with Whitelaw as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. (Dixon, 2001, p.118-121). Civil rights movements were still pursuing their goals through marches and peaceful demonstrations, however, the PIRA had also adopted its violent campaign. The PIRA felt positive about a possible victory and marked 1972 as the 'Year of Victory'(McEvoy, 2008, p.38).

Bloody Sunday took place on 30 January 1972, which is still remembered by the Nationalists as proof of the aggression of the British Army and its siding with the Unionist side (McEvoy, 2008, p.38). 1972 was the most violent year of the Troubles with an estimated number of 497 deaths, which is 13,8% of the victims of the Troubles (Fay, Morrissey, & Smyth, 1999, p.137). Though surprisingly, the PIRA initiated two ceasefires in March and June (Cowper-Coles, 2012, p.225).

The president of Provisional Sinn Féin, which has the main focus of this research, is Ruairi O Bradaigh. The president of Official Sinn Féin is Tomas MacGiolla. In 1972 the two parties were split, but not as strongly opposed to each other as later in the 1970s. The clear division between the two parties is the support of the armed struggle and abstentionism. A strong connection existed between the PIRA and the Provisional Sinn Féin, with the PIRA at the forefront in a military campaign and the support of Sinn Féin in publicity (Feeney, 2002, p.257-260). Provisional Sinn Féin abstained from the Northern Ireland Assembly and Westminster Parliament, thus a parliamentary discussion in 1972 cannot be analysed here.

Presidential speech, Ard Fheis, 15-16 December 1972

The Ard Fheis is the annual meeting of Sinn Féin where all fragments come together to discuss strategy and policy. The presidential speech is found in a copy of the Ard Fheis '72 Report.

However, the document does not prescribe which president is speaking. It is expected, though not certain, that the president speaking here is MacGiolla, since the document indicates Sinn Féin's participation in the general Irish elections. Goals of both parties are similar, including anti-imperialist goals and independence of Ireland, except on the cases of abstentionism and the use of military action in the North (Feeney, 2002, p.252).

The strongest and most apparent discourse to be found in the document is on imperialism and British repression. It is made clear that British rule over Northern Ireland is a form of imperialism and raises anti-colonial sentiments. Sinn Féin rejects British rule in the North and connects this to the territorial struggle of independence and unification. The British Army is perceived as a foreign army occupying Northern Ireland. Emphasis is placed on the repression and aggression of the British Army and the British government against the Nationalist and Catholic Community:

> "To add to the reign of terror, special murder squads of the British Army were sent to the North to operate in civilian clothing" (Ard Fheis '72, 1972, p.7).

Not only is the issue of imperialism raised regarding the territorial struggle in Northern Ireland, but also regarding British imperial involvement in the Republic of Ireland and the Irish membership of the E.E.C.:

> "Even the most cursory analysis of the events of the past year will indicate it was a victorious year for British Imperialism in Ireland. It saw the imposition of Direct Rule under a one man dictatorship; a growth in sectarian organisations and a massive increase in sectarian bombings and murders; total harassment and terrorising of the population of the North; the Irish nation tied closer to Britain in the E.E.C.; fear and confusion spread amongst the people and fascism rampant, North and South" (Ard Fheis '72, 1972, p.7).

Overall, Sinn Féin rejects British rule and involvement in both the North, where Britain is perceived as a repressive and illegitimate occupant, and the South, where Britain maintains its colonial ties.

This discourse is tied to the struggle of Sinn Féin to free Northern Ireland and unite it with the Republic. It is made clear that the present quest for a united Ireland moves beyond the objective of unification of North and South. All influences of the British on the Irish island should be

expelled and ownership of the Irish territory should be regained. Emphasis in the address is put on the re-conquest of Ireland and the anti-imperialist struggle:

> "Basically our objective can be stated to be the re-conquest of Ireland and our struggle is for the ownership and control of the wealth of Ireland by the mass of the Irish people. We are the only organisation pursuing this objective in its entirety" (Ard Fheis '72, 1972, p.11).

Also very persistent is the use of the Irish language. The first two pages of the presidential speech are in Irish. Unfortunately, due to the author's lack of Irish language skills and the scope of the research, this cannot be translated. However, the substantial use of the language indicates a connection to the Irish heritage and differentiates Irish Sinn Féin from the British. It creates a feeling of unity, connecting only the people on the island of Ireland.

Less apparent, though still present, is the reference to the Easter Risings and its leaders. It is believed that the Easter Risings led to the independence of Ireland and remains the true republican example to follow. It is explained that the struggle has since lost its track. To go back to the essentials, the same ideology of the Easter Risings' leaders, like Connolly, should be adopted:

> "We have done a re-assessment and analysis of the role and policies of Sinn Fein. We have tried to correct past errors and have attempted to push through the anti-imperialist struggle in the context of the struggle for socialism. We have had our successes and we have had our failures, but at all times we have tried to be true to Connolly" (Ard Fheis '72, 1972, p.15-16).

It can be concluded that British rule and identity is entirely rejected by Sinn Féin, which legitimises its struggle towards the independence of Northern Ireland and the unification with the Republic of Ireland. Moderation towards the British is not present at all.

After every discourse analysis, a content analysis of the source can be found (e.g. Table 3). The way the content analysis is conducted can be found in the chapter 'Content Analysis'. The data in 'Total' shows the total percentage of discourse regarding aspirations of independence Northern Ireland.

Independence/unification	2,54%
British imperialism/repression	7,32%
Other similar struggles	0,17%
Historical struggle	0,29%
Irish	14,99%
Total	25,30%

Table 3: Content Analysis Presidential speech, Ard Fheis, 15-16 December 1972

Joe Cahill at rally in Dublin, 1971

This text is retrieved from a radio broadcast of RTE during the show Current Affairs. It contains a speech by Joe Cahill at a Sinn Féin rally in Dublin in 1971. Even though it is not a 1972 fragment, the topic addressed is very relevant. Additionally, due to the small quantity of relevant sources by the illegal organisation PIRA, the fragment is selected as a valuable source to this research. Even though Bloody Sunday had not taken place yet, the conflict was heated and the British Army was already deployed in Northern Ireland. Joe Cahill was involved in the split of the IRA in 1969 and the establishment of the PIRA. In 1971 Cahill was the PIRA commander in Belfast (The Guardian, 26/07/2004).

The strongest discourse can be found on the unification of Ireland. Cahill makes his message and the message of the PIRA clear, insisting that the freedom of Northern Ireland and Ireland must be achieved:

> "We are quite confident and I am not being overconfident when I say: we have the means and the will and the power to achieve freedom and we attend and tend to achieve it this time. Our children, your children, my children will grow up as free men and free women in a free peace loving Ireland. That is my main message here tonight. The struggle that's going on in the North today is a struggle for complete freedom!" (Cahill, 1971).

Also the aggression of the British government (and the Stormont and Irish governments) is brought up:

> "We of the republican movement set ourselves a task. First, the defence of the people in the North against any aggression. This we successfully accomplished. Then, when the British Army emerged as we expected them to come out in their true colors as the aggressive [...(unclear)] when they commenced their brutality

and their murder of Irish innocent victims, we issued an ultimatum to them, that we would retaliate and this thank god we did do and will continue to do" (Cahill, 1971).

The perceived aggression of the British Army generates a similar hostile reaction from Cahill. The PIRA will do anything to remove the aggressive British to protect the Irish people.

Only the categories on independence and British repression are present in the speech, which makes the message discussed earlier even stronger. The message is often repeated and explained; Ireland should be united and the British should withdraw.

Independence/unification	15,95%
British imperialism/repression	9,23%
Other similar struggles	0%
Historical struggle	0%
Irish	0%
Total	25,18%

Table 4: Content Analysis Joe Cahill at rally in Dublin, 1971

Overall, the discourses of both Sinn Féin and the PIRA create an image of an illegitimate, oppressive British ruler in both 'occupied' Northern Ireland as the 'neo-colonial' Republic of Ireland. This creates legitimacy of the other strong message; the goal of independence and unification. Irish is used to emphasise the Irish distinctive identity, though this is not present in the speech by Cahill. Moderation towards the British is non-existent. The British are the occupiers and they need to leave.

Discourse analysis 1998

1998 is the year of the Good Friday Agreement. The relationship between the PIRA and Sinn Féin has changed, moving Sinn Féin to the forefront, encouraging the PIRA towards a ceasefire. The negotiations that included Sinn Féin started in 1994. Up until March 1995 Sinn Féin had only offered proposals for the unification of Ireland, which had not been taken into account. Though since, Sinn Féin's proposals changed and had strong positions on reorganising the police force and the release of political prisoners. A setback for the Nationalists was the renouncing of the Irish claim to Northern Ireland, which meant that British rule was no longer illegitimate according to the Republic of Ireland. Nonetheless, during Sinn Féin's Ard Fheis of 1998, 97% voted in favour of the Good Friday Agreement (Tonge, 2002, p.183-185).

The peace agreement led to various reactions among the Nationalists. Sinn Féin perceived the Good Friday Agreement as a step towards unification (Tonge, 2002, p.183-185). Many PIRA members adapted to the turn towards a peaceful path, when respected members of the PIRA leadership, e.g. Martin McGuinness, were also convinced. It became clear that the PIRA's military actions were hurting Sinn Féin's political campaign (Moloney, 2002, p.383). The PIRA now used violence as leverage to influence the negotiations, for example during the breaking of the ceasefire in 1996, when the peace process had been perceived as too slow and not inclusive (Berti, 2013, p.157-161).

Sinn Féin had also changed its strategy by maintaining better relationships with the other parties like SDLP and the British government and became more involved with the rest of the community. It emphasised its distinctiveness from the PIRA while not criticizing it. The perception of how a united Ireland would be achieved changed for both Sinn Féin and the PIRA. With the Good Friday Agreement Sinn Féin accepted to enter the Northern Ireland Assembly, but would still abstain from Westminster. The PIRA on the other hand refused to decommission on the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, but its use of violence declined after the Good Friday Agreement (Berti, 2013, p.159-166).

First Northern Ireland Assembly, 1 July 1998

The first Northern Ireland Assembly took place shortly after the referendum on 22 May 1998 and the elections 25 June 1998. Topics discussed are the appointments of the First and Deputy First Ministers, the Committee to advise the Presiding Officer and the Orange Order parade.

Only the text spoken by Sinn Féin's Assembly Members are taken into account within the context of the parliamentary debate.

It is interesting that the discourse on independence and illegitimate British rule or repression is hardly present. There is a reference by Gerry Adams to the 'historical aim', however, it is unclear whether this is the unification of Ireland or the aim to create a Northern Ireland that is free of discrimination and repression. British and Unionist repression is only mentioned once by Martin McGuinness saying:

> "We are here on behalf of people who have been discriminated against since the foundation of the Northern state. We are here on behalf of people who want an end to inequality, discrimination, domination and injustice" (Northern Ireland Assembly, McGuinness, 01/07/1998).

The absence of a strong discourse on independence or British illegitimate rule indicates moderation. Also the acceptance and the reiteration of support of the Good Friday Agreement by various Sinn Féin members shows a form of acceptance of the Northern Irish situation. Describing this as acceptance of the British rule is an overstatement, but it could be perceived as acceptance of the situation as it is:

> "We reiterated our support for the Agreement" (Northern Ireland Assembly, Adams, 01/07/1998).

> "the only piece of paper which counts here is the Good Friday Agreement" (Northern Ireland Assembly, McGuinness, 01/07/1998).

However, their Irish distinctiveness is emphasised by the substantial use of the Irish language. Almost all Assembly Members of Sinn Féin start their statements in Irish, which they have to translate into English for the non-Irish speaking Assembly Members. This way Sinn Féin distinguishes themselves and promotes the Irish language and culture:

> "The Irish language has been used by Sinn Fein members for years […] and it will continue to be used by them" (Northern Ireland Assembly, Maskey, 01/07/1998).

The discourse on independence and British imperialism is hardly present, showing some moderation brought by the Good Friday Agreement. Though, a connection to the Irish identity and a feeling of 'us and them' is created by the use of the Irish language. However, the overall discourse on independence is not strong.

Independence/unification	0,16%
British imperialism/repression	1,16%
Other similar struggles	0%
Historical struggle	0%
Irish	11,29%
Total	12,60%

Table 5: Content Analysis First Northern Ireland Assembly, 1 July 1998

Presidential Speech, Ard Fheis, 18 April 1998

The presidential speech is given by Gerry Adams, who was closely involved in the peace talks and the establishment of the Good Friday Agreement. The agreement has been signed by the leaders involved in the talks on 10 April 1998 and the confirming referendum took place on 22 May 1998 (BBC History, n.d.). During this Ard Fheis, Sinn Féin discusses amongst each other whether and how the Good Friday Agreement fits in their strategy.

The strongest discourse can be found in the category of independence. The main message Adams brings, is that the Good Friday Agreement is part of a transitional process. It is a step towards the unification of Ireland:

> "So while the Agreement is not a settlement, it is a basis for advancement. It heralds a change in the status quo. And it could become a transitional stage towards reunification" (Adams, 18/04/1998).

> "We have our eye on the prize. The prize of freedom" (Adams, 18/04/1998).

This message is necessary to convince the critics within the party. A strong setback for many republicans in the Good Friday Agreement, is the renouncing of the Irish claim over Northern Ireland. However Sinn Féin argues that if they achieve political strength, they will be able to reach a united Ireland anyway (Adams, 19/04/1998). In the end, British rule over Northern Ireland is not accepted by Adams, although this notion is not as strong as it was before:

> "The talks process has not settled centuries of British interference in Ireland. […] Britain has never had any right to be in Ireland. Britain will never have any right to be in Ireland" (Adams, 18/04/1998).

The reference to earlier Irish struggles strengthens the discourse on the British illegitimate rule and brings inspiration. It is also used as a way of reflection. This fits the context of an address concerning a peace treaty, which is a turning point in the struggle:

"Two hundred years ago the United Irish Movement rose against British occupation of our country. We stand today before the slogan which inspired that Movement. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. We can draw inspiration and example from the men and women of 1798" (Adams, 18/04/1998).

Not only past clashes with the British government are used to justify the Nationalist aims, but also comparisons to other similar struggles. By acknowledging the similar struggle of others, comparisons can be made to justify one's own struggle. This is done by inviting speakers from for example the Spanish self-determination movement ETA from the Basque country (UCDP[2], n.d).

What is surprising, since Irish is used in most addresses by Sinn Féin to emphasise their Irish heritage, is that the Irish language is not spoken at all. This might be symbolic for bringing the whole community together, also the non-Irish speakers (Unionists). It might also be perceived as moderation towards Britain.

Other forms of moderation are mainly addressed towards the Unionists in Northern Ireland. It is a way to start uniting the people of Northern Ireland and to continue the peace process:

"Republicans have no wish to discriminate against you; to dominate you; to marginalise you; to drive you from this island; to make you second class citizens in the land of your birth" (Adams, 18/04/1998).

Moderation towards the UK cannot be found explicitly. However, the address has a less hostile rhetoric, which can be perceived as a minimal form of moderation. This shows the influence of the Good Friday Agreement. The speech also shows willingness to use peaceful means to reach Sinn Féin's goal of Irish unification, in which the Good Friday Agreement is a transitional phase. The overall discourse on independence is weaker, which can be perceived in the percentages in Table 6.

Independence/unification	5,12%
British imperialism/repression	3,57%
Other similar struggles	0,09%
Historical struggle	0,72%
Irish	0%
Total	9,50%

Table 6: Content Analysis Presidential Speech, Ard Fheis, 18 April 1998

Statement PIRA on decommissioning in An Phoblacht, 30 April 1998

The statement by the PIRA is published in An Phoblacht, the magazine of Sinn Féin, days after the signing of the agreement. An issue that has been topic of debate for many years is the decommissioning of the PIRA and other paramilitaries. The PIRA has a strong stance in this. Even though it claims to be committed to the peace process, decommissioning will happen on their own terms.

The discourse on independence and unification is not as strong as before, even though it is clear that a united Ireland is still the goal:

> "We face the future united, committed and dedicated to the struggle for Irish Unity
> and Independence" (P. O'Neill, 30/04/1998).

However, an observable change is the means through which this goal is targeted. Moderation cannot be found concerning the Unionists nor the British, though it can be found towards the peace process and Sinn Féin. The PIRA does agree with the new peaceful way and supports this, which could be perceived as moderation:

> "We commend the efforts of Sinn Féin. They can be confident of our desire to see
> all republicans engage in their decision-making process at this time in a constructive
> and positive way" (P. O'Neill, 30/04/1998).

Also, the discourse on imperialism and British repression is present, though not as much as before:

> "It remains our position that a durable peace settlement demands the end of British
> rule in Ireland" (P. O'Neill, 30/04/1998).

It is clear that the PIRA does not accept the British rule and works on its own terms, especially regarding decommissioning. The PIRA wants to maintain self-determination in this:

> "This issue [decommissioning], as with any other matter affecting the IRA, its
> functions and objectives, is a matter only for the IRA, to be decided upon and
> pronounced upon by us" (P. O'Neill, 30/04/1998).

The Irish language is not really present. Though they call themselves 'Óglaigh na hÉireann', which is mostly translated with regards to the PIRA as 'Irish Volunteers'. This shows their connection to the Irish language and Irish identity.

Thus, the discourse on independence is still strong among the PIRA, however, they also show commitment to peaceful means through their support of the efforts by Sinn Féin. Though, again, independence still remains their goal.

Independence/unification	7,59%
British imperialism/repression	2,17%
Other similar struggles	0%
Historical struggle	0%
Irish	0,81%
Total	10,57%

Table 7: Content Analysis Statement PIRA on decommissioning in An Phoblacht, 30 April 1998

Overall, the Good Friday Agreement has resulted in a less powerful and hostile discourse on independence among Sinn Féin and the PIRA. Though, the Good Friday Agreement is perceived as a transitional phase towards independence, which remains their main goal. Also, their commitment to peaceful means is expressed and can also be observed when Sinn Féin enters the Northern Ireland Assembly. Interesting is the difference in strength of the discourse of Sinn Féin in the Northern Ireland Assembly and the speech at the Ard Fheis. Addressing a different public seems to matter.

Discourse analysis 2015

Sinn Féin has become an established political party with policies not only regarding Irish unification, but addressing public policy in various areas as well. Even though the unification is still Sinn Féin's goal, it seems like it is not prioritised over everything else (Whiting, 2016, p.548). Sinn Féin has 29 seats in the Northern Ireland Assembly, making it the second biggest party, the biggest Nationalist party and therefore a governing party (BBC, 11/05/2011). The party still refuses to enter Westminster Parliament, where they have 4 seats (BBC, 2018). In 2015 the Fresh Start Agreement was established, which dealt with problems of paramilitaries and the welfare reforms. However, the parties to the Agreement were not able to agree on the way to deal with the legacies of the Troubles, for example in terms of parades and flags (BBC, 19/11/2015).

The PIRA has officially decommissioned in 2005 and stopped existing since. However, unofficially there are still splinter groups and remnants of the PIRA which undermine the police forces. In 2015, former PIRA members Gerard Davison and Kevin McGuigan were killed, allegedly by members of the PIRA. Their deaths caused a political row. However, Sinn Fein had a different reaction to the violence than during the Troubles, namely to distance themselves from and deny the existence of the PIRA (BBC, 13/08/2015). Punishments (within its communities) through shootings or beatings by the PIRA and other former paramilitary groups are still present and the groups are often compared to the mafia. The unification of Ireland and illegitimate British rule seem unlikely to be the main cause of their existence. Most groups have gone into organised crime and most attacks are a form of punishment of 'antisocial behaviour' (NOS, 22/05/2018).

Northern Ireland Assembly, 7 September 2015

The Assembly meeting of 7 September 2015 is chosen deliberately because of its context. During the summer recess the murders of Gerard Davison and Kevin McGuigan were conducted, which is one of the topics discussed during this meeting. Due to the alleged involvement of the PIRA, it is interesting to discuss Sinn Féin's discourse. Additionally, the topic of the Queen as the longest serving monarch is addressed, which could be a sensitive topic for Sinn Féin as well. Further agenda points are e.g. the Syrian refugee crisis, improving the Northern Irish economy, creating jobs and the childcare strategy.

There is no explicit call for a united Ireland at all. However it is mentioned that Sinn Féin is a republican party, which is connected to the aim of a united Ireland. It could also be argued that Sinn Féin is trying to reach its goal through regular policy:

> "Transport infrastructure is a vital element of the economy across the region, as Mr Humphrey mentioned. Máirtín Ó Muilleoir commented on the need […] for improved rail links between Dublin and Belfast, highlighting that the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor is important if we are to achieve a step change in business performance across this island. That was very much to the fore about 20 years ago, and it needs to be put back on the political agenda" (Northern Ireland Assembly, Flanagan, 07/09/2015).

By implementing (subtle changes to) policy that creates stronger ties between Northern Ireland and Ireland, small progress could be made towards a united Ireland. Yet, overall, Sinn Féin seems focused on governing Northern Ireland within the framework of devolution.

When the topic of the PIRA in connection to the murders of Gerard Davison and Kevin McGuigan is addressed, Sinn Féin denies PIRA's existence and claims it will never exist again. This is a particularly strong statement. Sinn Féin only wants to reach its goal through peaceful means and will not take up arms to reach its goal. This shows acceptance of the situation and possibly a reduction in the strength of the aim, since not all means are acceptable anymore:

> "Sinn Féin does not agree with the Chief Constable's assessment that the IRA exists, even in the benign way that he states. The IRA left the stage in 2005 and it is not coming back" (Northern Ireland Assembly, Kelly, 07/09/2015).

Additionally, no reference to British illegitimate rule can be found in Sinn Féin's text. By governing and participating in the democratic process and cooperating with the British government, it seems like a 'regular' party operating under British rule. Interesting to pay extra attention to, is the topic of the Queen as the longest-serving monarch. The Speaker wrote a letter congratulating her on behalf of the whole Assembly. It is surprising Sinn Féin did not oppose to the statement on behalf of the Assembly. This is surprising since previously, Sinn Féin would not have recognised the Queen as the legitimate ruler of Northern Ireland and would have refused to congratulate her on her 'illegitimate' rule. It is still an overstatement to conclude that Sinn Féin accepts British rule over Northern Ireland, though they have weakened their discourse.

The only way in which the earlier struggle or repression of the Nationalists is brought up, is in the discussion of the refugee crisis:

> "There is a wonderful four-city initiative on this island, and the Irish people are saying, "You are welcome here. Tá fáilte romhaibh anseo. We know what it is like to suffer. We know what it is like to have to flee" (Northern Ireland Assembly, Ruane, 07/09/2015).

It is not used in any regard to a united Ireland; it is used to make the refugee situation relatable. It is not clear if Ruane is referring to the Troubles and earlier British repression, though it seems likely.

What is notable, is the substantial use of the Irish language. It is mostly used to thank the Speaker or the speaking Assembly Member, again emphasising Sinn Féin's Irishness.

Overall, Northern Irish independence and British imperialism are not mentioned, though Sinn Féin might be trying to create stronger ties with Ireland through policies. This connection with Ireland is further strengthened by the use of the Irish language. However, no explicit references to independence are made, showing a weak discourse. It might even show a form of acceptance of Northern Ireland under devolution.

Independence/unification	0,38%
British imperialism/repression	0,02%
Other similar struggles	0%
Historical struggle	0,14%
Irish	1,34%
Total	1,88%

Table 8: Content Analysis Northern Ireland Assembly, 7 September 2015

Presidential speech, Ard Fheis, 7 March 2015

When Adams addresses his party, he mentions the topic of a united Ireland, but the main focus of the address is on the financial cuts imposed by the British government and the Eurozone. In 2015 financial cuts have been announced by Westminster, which are not well received by especially Nationalist parties (The Guardian, 26/05/2015). Interesting is that the unification of Ireland is not addressed through the illegitimate rule of the British, but through policies:

> "Many people now realise that it makes no sense to have two economies, two education systems, two health systems, two tax codes, two currencies on one small

island. The sense of one island, one Ireland can work for everyone. I believe we need a national conversation on all of this. A conversation about the future" (Adams, 07/03/2015).

Other references to a united Ireland can be found in more subtle wording. For example referring to the whole island of Ireland as 'Ireland' or talking about an 'island wide campaign'. The party behaves like Ireland and Northern Ireland are already united.

However, the discourse on independence is much weaker than in earlier addresses. Also, the topic of British illegitimate rule is not addressed at all, which could point to a more accepting stance by Sinn Féin regarding British rule. Also, some moderation can be found regarding the Unionists in Northern Ireland:

"We need reminded again and again that our flag is Orange. Orange as well as green. Orange is part of what we are. That is our potential. And our challenge. To unite Orange and Green in equality and mutual respect" (Adams, 07/03/2015).

On the other hand, some references are made to historical struggles, but mostly in a commemorative way:

"Dealing with the past is very difficult. Yesterday was the anniversary of the Gibraltar killings. Today is Sam Marshall's anniversary. Every day marks an anniversary for someone, for some family, for some community" (Adams, 07/03/2015).

Also references are made to other similar struggles. Some ambassadors of other countries with similar struggles are invited, again ambassadors from the Basque country. Interesting to note is the following explicit request:

"Tonight, I call on the Irish government to act on the Sinn Féin motion adopted unanimously by the Dáil and to recognise the state of Palestine" (Adams, 07/03/2015).

This is not only mentioned because of the Palestinian struggle for territory, but because of the British involvement in Palestine. Sinn Féin is of the opinion that the cases in Palestine and Northern Ireland are both the result of British imperialism. The question could be raised as a result of the recognition of Palestine: if Palestine is recognised as a state, why would Northern Ireland not be recognised? Therefore, it strengthens and justifies the struggle of Sinn Féin.

As opposed to the presidential address of 1998, Irish is often used in short phrases creating a connection to the Irish identity. Also reference is made to the Irish Language Act to promote the Irish language.

As mentioned before, the independence of Northern Ireland is addressed mainly through policies. However, much attention is given to policies other than independence. This shows a weaker discourse, especially with the absence of discourse on illegitimate British rule. Though again, the Irish language is promoted and shows connectedness to the Irish identity.

Independence/unification	4,05%
British imperialism/repression	0,18%
Other similar struggles	0,33%
Historical struggle	3,50%
Irish	8,28%
Total	16,34%

Table 9: Content Analysis Presidential speech, Ard Fheis, 7 March 2015

Eamonn Mallie meets… Martin McGuinness, 2015

Martin McGuinness is a former member of the PIRA (second in command in Derry), had a strong role in the peace process and was Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland as a member of Sinn Féin in 2015. Even though McGuinness might not seem like the most representative former PIRA member as Deputy First Minister, he has used violent means during the Troubles under the PIRA and made a transformation into the use of peaceful means like most former members. Therefore, this interview is chosen for the analysis.

Martin McGuinness made no reference to a united Ireland. He played an important role in the peace process and had a prominent role in the Northern Ireland Assembly. He chose his words carefully during the interview and did not want to create any disturbance in society. Yet, it is remarkable for a member of Sinn Féin and a former PIRA member to not mention independence. Additionally, the Irish language and Irish distinctiveness is not referred to at all.

References to British illegitimate rule and repression are made when discussing why McGuinness became a member of the PIRA. He was born in Derry, Northern Ireland, a place that posed strong opposition in the fight against the British:

"Well this was during the course of the Battle of the Bogside and effectively the entire Bogside area where I came from was at war with the RUC and with those

who were involved in enforcing the inequalities and discriminations that people were being subjected to" (McGuinness, 2015).

"The city was effectively occupied by the British Army. The forces of the state, the B-Specials, the RUC, huge violence was being used against the community, innocent people were being shot dead" (McGuinness, 2015).

This discourse does not portray McGuinness' 2015 opinion necessarily; it explains his vision in the 1970s when he joined the PIRA. Recent references are not made. In similar fashion, references are made to historical events like Bloody Sunday and the Battle of the Bogside. This is not used in a commemorative way to fire up the discussion or to find justification for the current struggle, but to explain McGuinness' reasons to join the PIRA.

Again, the absence of discourse on the aim for a united Ireland and on the current British illegitimate rule, might point into a direction of acceptance. Concluding that an acceptance of the British rule is present would be an exaggeration, but it could be perceived as an acceptance of the current Northern Irish situation. Moderation can also be found in McGuinness' relation toward the Unionist community:

"[…] some of the strongest friends that I have throughout what has been a very difficult process, come from the Protestant churches, come from the Protestant community" (McGuinness, 2015).

Independence/unification	0%
British imperialism/repression	3,36%
Other similar struggles	0%
Historical struggle	0,42%
Irish	0%
Total	3,78%

Table 10: Content Analysis Eamonn Mallie meets… Martin McGuinness, 2015

Taking the three 2015 sources into account, one can observe a decrease in the strength of discourse on independence within Sinn Féin and the PIRA. It is not absent, but reduced to a minimal level. Sinn Féin might use its position as a governing party to implement policies that strengthen the ties between Northern Ireland and Ireland, however, few explicit references are made to a united Ireland. Though the Ard Fheis still has stronger discourse on independence than Sinn Féin in the Northern Ireland Assembly, the presidential speech at the Ard Fheis has

also become more concerned with national policy. Interesting is the interview with the former PIRA member, which shows a strong contrast with the earlier used PIRA sources. It shows that the PIRA as a group aiming for independence through violence has stopped existing.

Content analysis

The sources used for the content analysis are newspaper articles from the Irish Times. These articles are not chosen at random. The newspaper articles are retrieved from the Irish Times archive, which maintains online copies of old newspapers. Sinn Féin affiliated search terms were used to search articles that contained mostly Sinn Féin's discourse. After this selection was made, articles with a discourse on independence were chosen. When these were non-existent, this could indicate the decrease in the aspirations and an article on an affiliated topic would be chosen. Since the articles had to be counted by hand and the content analysis had to be done by hand, the scope was restricted. Therefore, every year in the timeframe of 1972-2015 was divided in three sections, resulting in the selection of the months January, May and September. As it was rare that all three months contained a suiting article, it was decided to search for two articles each year in two of the three months. Though, future research should be conducted with a larger scope trying to find a source for every month for every year. Another remark is that the Irish Times is not objective. The editors and journalists made a decision in what was printed and what not, which influences the research and is acknowledged. Future research would require the use of sources like Sinn Féin manifestos and party programmes. However, to get a hand on this was also beyond the scope of the research.

The overall result was 82 sources to be used in the content analysis. For the year 1982 no suiting articles were found. For 1976, 1977, 1979, 1980 and 1983 only one article was found. This is mainly caused by censorship. The categories used are similar to the categories used for the discourse analysis. The categories are counted separately, but their overall percentage is shown in graph 1 below.

% Discourse independence
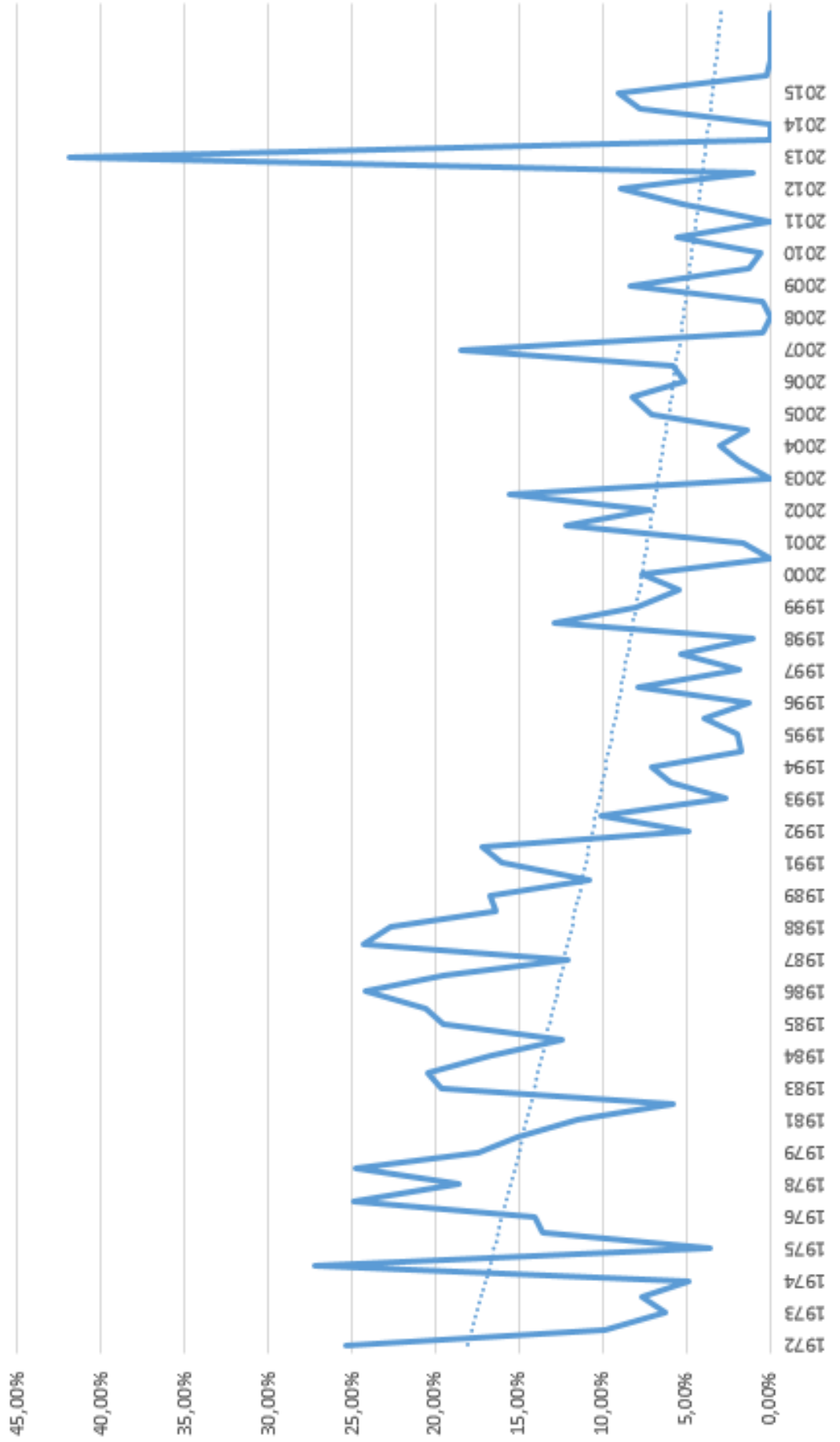
Graph 1: percentage discourse on independence Sinn Féin in the Irish Times, 1972-2015

When looking at the graph and the trend displayed, it is clear that the discourse on independence has decreased over the years. The trend even shows a diagonal downward line. It is interesting that the discourse strongly decreased when the official peace talks began in 1990's and Sinn Féin wanted to be included. However, 1998 shows a peak. Sinn Féin probably tries to convince its followers here, that independence is still its goal.

In the years after the peace agreement some newspaper articles show a percentage of zero or near to zero, in which Sinn Féin discusses other policies than independence. However, the fluctuation also shows that the discourse on independence is not absent. Though looking solely at the trend, one would argue that from the peace talks on, the discourse on independence of Sinn Féin (displayed in the Irish Times) decreased and continued to decrease in the long term.

Conclusion

To answer the research question: "*does territorial power sharing, as the outcome of an ethnic conflict, lead to decreasing aspirations of independence among self-determination movements over time?"* a discourse analysis and content analyses have been conducted on the aspirations of independence of Sinn Féin and the PIRA in Northern Ireland. It has been argued by some (Coronel Ferrer, 2012; Kymlicka, 1998; Bertrand, 2014) that TPS will not lead to decreasing aspirations in the long term.

When taking the discourse analysis and content analysis into account, it is clear that the discourse on independence of Sinn Féin and the PIRA have decrease since the peace talks in the 1990's, indicating a decrease in aspirations of independence. The content analysis shows a downward linear trend, indicating that the decrease in the discourse on independence is a continuing process. However, this is more nuanced when the meaning of the discourse is taken into account in the discourse analysis. Even though the PIRA has stopped existing, Sinn Féin seems to be focussing on a long-term strategy for independence and unification with Ireland. This seems to be related to Cornell's argument, where Sinn Féin is using politics and policy changes to reach their goal, for example through the Language Act, infrastructure, currency and connecting the economies on the island. They are gaining political strength necessary to achieve a referendum on the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. This strategy is implicitly mentioned in the Ard Fheis and implemented in the Northern Ireland Assembly meetings, resulting in a discrepancy in the discourses in the Assembly and the presidential speeches.

However, the Good Friday Agreement and the peace talks have created a difference in the discourse on independence of Sinn Féin and the PIRA. Though the content analysis shows a strong decrease, it also shows that the aspirations are still present. The Good Friday Agreement has especially made a difference in the means, following the arguments by Lijphart and Cohen. The self-determination movements are now able to use legal and democratic channels, instead of violence, to bring about change.

Hypothesis 1 is accepted; TPS (in Northern Ireland) leads to decreasing aspirations of independence in the short term. Hypothesis 2 is, however, more ambiguous. Though the content analysis shows a continuously decreasing trend, it seems like Sinn Féin has a long-term plan for independence and unification in the discourse analysis.

Therefore, further research should be conducted over a longer period of time to see the process more clearly. Also, more cases should be researched to be able to make a more general and theoretical conclusion. Further research could especially be relevant for governments wanting to maintain their territorial borders and peace. Taking this research into account, TPS might not be helpful to maintain one's territory in the long-term. Additionally, the resurrection of the question of independence might be destabilising the peace. This is especially the case in Northern Ireland, with aggressive splinter paramilitary groups still present and not one generation passed. A resurrection of the independence question and possibly a referendum would be able to cause an increase in violence. If it can be concluded that an increase in aspirations of independence is the long-term effect of TPS, more research should be done to find ways to prevent this. Overall, TPS has a positive short term effect and moves the (violent) struggle of independence to legal and democratic institutions.

Bibliography

Adams, G. (18/04/1998). *Ard Fheis '98 Presidential Address*. Retrieved on 09/07/2018 from http://www.sinnfein.org/ardfheis/98ardfheis/gerry.html

Adams, G. (19/04/1998). *Ard Fheis '98 Closing Remarks*. Retrieved on 27/07/2018 from http://www.sinnfein.org/ardfheis/98ardfheis/gerryclose.html

Adams, G. (07/03/2015). *Presidential Speech of Gerry Adams at Ard Fheis 2015*. Retrieved on 10/07/2018 from http://www.sinnfein.ie/contents/34076

An Phoblacht. (02/09/2012). *Gerrymandering Electoral Boundaries*. Retrieved on 07/08/2018 from http://www.anphoblacht.com/contents/22187

Ard Fheis '72. (1972). *Ard Fheis '72 Report*. [Booklet]. Retrieved on 22/06/2018 from https://cedarlounge.wordpress.com/2010/05/24/left-archive-ard-fheis-report-official-sinn-fein-1972-1973/

Barter, S.J. (2018). Rethinking Territorial Autonomy. *Regional Studies, 52*(2), p.298-309.

BBC. (11/05/2011). *Northern Ireland Elections*. Retrieved on 19/07/2018 from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special/election2011/constituency/html/northern_ireland.stm

BBC. (13/08/2015). *Kevin McGuigan Murder: Ex-IRA Man Shot Dead in East Belfast*. Retrieved on 18/07/2018 from https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-33896234

BBC. (19/11/2015). *Victims Forum Demands Apology over Stormont Deal Omission*. Retrieved on 19/07/2018 from https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-34875061

BBC. (2018). *Election 2015: Results*. Retrieved on 19/07/2018 from https://www.bbc.com/news/election/2015/results/northern_ireland

BBC. (05/02/2018). *Stormont Deadlock: Need-to-Know Guide*. Retrieved on 19/06/2018 from https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-politics-41723268

BBC History. (n.d.). *Good Friday Agreement*. Retrieved on 27/07/2018 from http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/good_friday_agreement

BBC History. (2018). *Good Friday Agreement*. Retrieved on 19/06/2018 from http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/events/good_friday_agreement

Benedikter, T. (2009). *Solving Ethnic Conflict through Self-Government. A Short Guide to Autonomy in South Asia and Europe*. Retrieved on 19/11/2017 from http://www.eurac.edu/en/research/autonomies/minrig/Documents/Eurasia/Deliverable_No_9_Update_Set_educational_material.pdf

Berti, B. (2013). *Armed Political Organizations from Conflict to Integration*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bertrand, J. (2014). Autonomy and Stability: The Perils of Implementation and "Divide-and-Rule" Tactics in Papua, Indonesia. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, 20*(2), p.174-199.

Brancati, D. (2006). Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism. *International Organization, 60*(3), p. 651-6855.

Britannica Online Academic Edition. (2018) Sinn Féin. In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved on 19/06/2018 from https://academic-eb-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/levels/collegiate/article/Sinn-F%C3%A9in/67944

Bryman, A. (2008). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Butenshøn, N.A., Stiansen, Ø. & Vollan, K. (2015). *Power-Sharing in Conflict-Ridden Societies. Challenges for Building Peace and Democratic Stability*. Surrey (UK): Ashgate.

Cahill, J. (1972). *Current Affairs Joe Cahill – Sinn Féin Rally* [Sound recording]. Raidió Teilifís Éireann.

Cohen, F.S. (1997). Proportional versus Majoritarian Ethnic Conflict Management in Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies, 30*(5), p. 607-630.

Cornell, S. E. (2002). Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective. *World Politics, 54*(2), p. 245-276.

Coronel Ferrer, M. (2012). To Share or Divide Power? Minorities in Autonomous Regions, the Case of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 35*(12), p.2097-2115.

Council of Foreign Relations. (2005). *Northern Ireland Loyalist Paramilitaries*. Retrieved on 11/06/2018 from https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/northern-ireland-loyalist-paramilitaries-uk-extremists

Council of Foreign Relations. (2006). *Terrorist Groups and Political Legitimacy*. Retrieved on 11/06/2018 from https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/terrorist-groups-and-political-legitimacy

Cowper-Coles, F. (2012). 'Anxious for Peace': the Provisional IRA in Dialogue with the British Government, 1972–75. *Irish Studies Review, 20*(3), p.223-242.

Deacon, R. (2012). *Devolution in the United Kingdom* (2nd ed., Politics study guides). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Dickinson, H.T. (2005). *Constitutional Documents of the United Kingdom 1782-1835*. München: De Gruyter.

Dixon, P. (2001). *Northern Ireland: the Politics of War and Peace*. Hampshire & New York: Palgrave.

Donohue, L.K. (1998). Regulating Northern Ireland: The Special Powers Acts, 1922-1972. *The Historical Journal, 41*(4), p.1089-1120.

Fay, M., Morrissey, M., & Smyth, M. (1999). *Northern Ireland's Troubles the Human Costs*. London: Pluto Press in association with The Cost of the Troubles Study.

Feeney, B. (2002). *Sinn Féin: A Hundred Turbulent Years*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Fuh-Sheng Hsieh, J. (2013). Arend Lijphart and Consociationalism. *Taiwan Journal of Democracy, Special Issue*, p.87-101.

Ghai, Y. (2000). Ethnicity and Autonomy: A Framework for Analysis. In Ghai, Y. (Ed.), *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-Ethnic States* (p.1-26). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Johnstone, B. (2002). *Discourse Analysis*. Malden & Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Kymlicka, W. (1998). Is Federalism a Viable Alternative to Secession? In Lehning, P.B. (Ed.), *Theories of Secession* (p.111-150). New York: Routledge Press.

Lijphart, A. (2008). *Thinking about Democracy; Power Sharing and Majority Rule in Theory and Practice.* London & New York: Routledge.

Lustic, I.S., Miodownik, D. & Eidelson, R.J. (2004). Secessionism in Multicultural States: Does Sharing Power Prevent or Encourage It? *American Political Science Review, 98*(2), p.209-229.

Mac Ginty, R., Muldoon, O.T. & Ferguson, N. (2007). No War, No Peace: Northern Ireland after the Agreement. *Political Psychology, 28*(1), p.1-11.

Maillot, A. (2005). *New Sinn Féin: Irish Republicanism in the Twenty-First Century*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Malešević, S. & Ó Dochartaigh, N. (2018). Why Combatants Fight: the Irish Republican Army and the Bosnian Serb Army Compared. *Theory and Society, 47*(3), p.293-326.

McAuley, J.W. & Tonge, J. (2007). "For God and for the Crown": Contemporary Political and Social Attitudes among Orange Order Members in Northern Ireland. *International Society of Political Psychology, 28*(1), p.33-52.

McEvoy, J. (2008). *The Politics of Northern Ireland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

McGuinness, J.M.P. (2015). *Eamonn Mallie Meets ... Martin McGuinness* [Television Series]. Retrieved on 10/07/2018 from http://irishtvadmin.vzaar.me/5276225

Moloney, E. (2002). *A Secret History of the IRA*. London: The Penguin Press.

Northern Ireland Assembly. (01/07/1998). *Northern Ireland Assembly, Wednesday 1 July 1998* [Hansard]. Retrieved on 22/06/2018 from http://archive.niassembly.gov.uk/record/reports/980701.htm

Northern Ireland Assembly. (07/09/2015). *Official Report: Monday 07 September 2015* [Hansard]. Retrieved on 23/07/2018 from http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2015/09/07&docID=242371

Northern Ireland Assembly. (2017). *Voting: Cross Community Voting*. Retrieved on 15/06/2018 from http://education.niassembly.gov.uk/post_16/the_work_of_the_assembly/representing/voting

NOS. (22/05/2018). *Twintig Jaar Vrede, Maar Niet in Noord-Ierse Achterstandswijken*. Retrieved on 18/07/2018 from https://nos.nl/nieuwsuur/artikel/2233019-twintig-jaar-vrede-maar-niet-in-noord-ierse-achterstandswijken.html

O'Neill, P. (30/04/1998). *Text of Irish Republican Army (IRA) Statement on Decommissioning 30 April 1998*. Retrieved on 20/07/2018 from http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/ira30498.htm

Prior, L. (2014). Content Analysis. In Leavy, P. (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Chapter 8). Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Punch, M. (2012). *State Violence, Collusion and the Troubles; Counter Insurgency, Government Deviance and Northern-Ireland*. London: Pluto Press.

Rolston, B. (2013). Dealing with the Past in Northern Ireland: The Current State of Play. *Estudios Irlandeses, 8*, p.143-149.

Rothchild, D. & Hartzell, C.A. (1999). Security in Deeply Divided Societies: The Role of Territorial Autonomy. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 5(3-4), p.254-271.

Ruane, J. & Todd, J. (1996). *The Dynamics of Conflict in Northern Ireland; Power, Conflict and Emancipation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shanahan, T. (2008). *The Provisional Irish Republican Army and the Morality of Terrorism*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Sinn Féin. (2018). *What Sinn Féin Stands For*. Retrieved on 19/06/2018 from http://www.sinnfein.ie/what-sinn-fein-stands-for

Smithey, L.A. (2011). *Unionists, Loyalists, and Conflict Transformation in Northern Ireland*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

The Belfast Agreement. (10/04/1998). *Policy Paper: The Belfast Agreement*. Retrieved on 15/06/2018 from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-belfast-agreement

The Guardian. (26/07/2004). *Joe Cahill*. Retrieved on 25/07/2018 from https://www.theguardian.com/news/2004/jul/26/guardianobituaries.northernireland

The Guardian. (26/05/2015). *Northern Ireland Coalition Close to Collapse in Row over Welfare Cuts*. Retrieved on 28/07/2018 from https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/may/26/northern-ireland-coalition-collapse-row-welfare-cuts

The Irish News. (15/10/2016). *Notorious UVF Mural in North Belfast Ready for Removal - but Not Just Yet.* Retrieved on 01/08/2018 from http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/10/15/news/notorious-mural-ready-for-removal-but-not-just-yet-737279/

Tonge, J. (2002). *Northern Ireland: Conflict and Change*. New York: Routledge.

Trzciński, K. (2017). Hybrid Power-Sharing in Indonesia. *Polish Political Science Yearbook, 46*(1), p.168–185.

UCDP[1]. (n.d.). *Government of United Kingdom – PIRA*. Retrieved on 22/12/2017 from http://ucdp.uu.se/#/statebased/692

UCDP[2]. (n.d.). *Government of Spain – ETA*. Retrieved on 25/07/2018 from http://ucdp.uu.se/#/statebased/763

Weller, M. (2008). *Escaping the Self-Determination Trap*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

Whiting, S. (2016). Mainstream Revolutionaries: Sinn Fein as a 'Normal' Political Party. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 28*(3), p.541-560.

Wolff, S. (2009). Complex Power-sharing and the Centrality of Territorial Self-governance in Contemporary Conflict Settlements. *Ethnopolitics*, *8*(1), p.27-45.